

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Status of Claims:

No claims are currently being cancelled.

No claims are currently being amended.

Claims 16-18 are currently being added.

This amendment and reply adds claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After adding the claims as set forth above, claims 1-18 are now pending in this application.

Claim Rejections – Prior Art:

In the Office Action, claims 1-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fuji Xerox (JP 6-105119) in view of Igarashi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,674,912). This rejection is traversed for the reasons given below.

The Office Action asserts that Fuji Xerox discloses, among other things, rotation processing means. The Office Action correctly recognizes that “Fuji Xerox does not expressly teach a virtual white line being used as a reference line or that a line immediately preceding a block is used as the reference line.” However, the Office Action incorrectly asserts that Igarashi discloses this feature. Furthermore, the Office Action incorrectly asserts that “Fuji Xerox (JP 6-105119) and Igarashi are combinable because they both rotate and compress image data.”

In more detail, Igarashi et al. is directed to Modified Modified Read (MMR) coding, and describes that after the coding of a line has completed, the coded line is used as the next reference line. See column 10, lines 13-15 of Igarashi et al.

However, Igarashi et al. does not disclose the performing of any rotation processing for image data, and thus the assertion made in the Office Action concerning the basis for

combining the Fuji Xerox reference and the Igarashi et al. reference is incorrect. Accordingly, these two references are not combinable to one skilled in the art.

The presently claimed invention compresses image data such that a virtual white line is used as a reference line when it is determined that all pixels in the block are white. Such features are not disclosed or suggested by the cited art of record.

With respect to independent claims 1, 11 and 13, rotation processing is performed for image data of a block when it is determined that not all pixels in the block are white by the judging means, and the rotation processing to be performed for the image data of the block is omitted when it is determined that all pixels in the block are white by the judging means.

As a result, compression means compresses the image data of the block such that a virtual white line is used as a reference line when it is determined that all pixels in the block are white by the judging means, and compresses the image data such that a line immediately preceding the block is used as a reference line when it is determined that not all pixels in the block are white by the judging means.

Such features as discussed above are not taught or suggested by the cited art of record, and furthermore the references Fuji Xerox and Igarashi et al. cannot be combined since Igarashi et al. is not directed to the performing of rotation processing.

Accordingly, independent claims 1, 11 and 13 are patentable over the cited art of record.

The presently pending dependent claims under rejection are patentable due to the specific features recited in those claims, as well as for their respective dependence on either claim 1, 11 or 13. For example, claims 7 and 8 recite features of rotation processing that are not disclosed or suggested by either Fuji Xerox or Igarashi et al. As mentioned above, Igarashi et al. does not disclose anything concerning rotation processing.

New Claims:

New claims 16-18 have been added to recite additional features of the present invention that are believed to provide a separate basis for patentability of these claims.

Conclusion:

Since all of the issues raised in the Office Action have been addressed in this Amendment and Reply, Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date December 6, 2005

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